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Notes on Geographic Distribution

Tropidophorus robinsoni Smith, 1919 (Squamata: Scincidae): New distribution record and map

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Abstract: We present a new locality for *Tropidophorus robinsoni* Smith, 1919 based on a specimen collected from Khlong Saeng Wildlife Sanctuary, Surat Thani Province, southern Thailand, a new provincial record. The geographical distribution of the species is reviewed and an updated distribution map is presented.

The lygosomine genus *Tropidophorus* Duméril and Bibron, 1839 (type species: *T. cocincinensis*) currently contains 28 species (Nguyen *et al.* 2010b). Its morphology is characterized by exposure of the tympanum and presence of a single scale at the corner of the eyelid (*e.g.*, Greer 1970; Hikida *et al*. 2002; Greer and Biswas 2004; Honda *et al*. 2006). The members of *Tropidophorus* are known to occur in two regions: (1) Indochina and adjacent parts of continental Eurasia exclusive of Peninsular Malaysia, and (2) the South-east Asian islands of Borneo, Sulawesi, and the Philippines (Honda *et al*. 2006).

Within Indochina, 15 species are recognized (Nguyen *et al.* 2010a). Among them, the Thai *Tropidophorus* contain nine species (Chuaynkern *et al.* 2005): *T. berdmorei* Blyth, 1853, *T. cocincinensis* Duméril and Bibron, 1839, *T. hangnam* Chuaynkern, Nabhitabhata, Inthara, Kamsook and Somsri, 2005, *T. laotus* Smith, 1923, *T. latiscutatus* Hikida, Orlov, Nabhitabhata and Ota, 2002, *T. matsuii* Hikida, Orlov, Nabhitabhata and Ota, 2002, *T. microlepis* Günther, 1861, *Tropidophorus robinsoni* Smith, 1919, and *T. thai* Smith, 1919. The distribution of the *Tropidophorus* in Thailand is summarized in several works (see *e.g.*, Smith 1919, 1923; Taylor 1963; Nabhitabhata *et al*. 2004; Nabhitabhata and Chan-ard 2005; Das 2010). These works show that reports on localities of *Tropidophorus* species in southern Thailand are rare. The present work represents an additional record of *Tropidophorus* in southern Thailand which fills a gap in this skink's known geographical distribution.

The specimen was caught by hand on 28th April 2010 by Likhit Waiprom from a small stream whose bottom is covered with small igneous rocks. The site coordinates are 8° 59' 32.748"N, 98° 48' 18.1542"E. The stream flows in dry evergreen forest in Khlong Saeng Wildlife Sanctuary, Surat Thani Province, southern Thailand. The skink was preserved in 10% buffered formalin, and later transferred into 70% ethanol. It was catalogued as THNHM 17962 in the collections of the Thailand Natural History Museum (THNHM), Pathum Thani, Thailand. Measurements were made with a digital caliper to the nearest 0.1 mm. Photographs were taken using a digital camera and modified by using Photoshop CS2 programs. The head drawing was made by L. Waiprom using ArcView program.

The specimen is an adult female (Figures 1 and 2) with a snout-vent length of 61.5 mm and a total length of 99 mm (tail regenerated). We assigned this specimen to *Tropidophorus robinsoni* based on its morphological characteristics that match the original description by Smith (1919) and other subsequent taxonomic works (see Taylor 1963; Chuaynkern *et al.* 2005; Nguyen *et al.* 2010a). This skink can be distinguished by the following characters: head scales keeled and rugose; dorsal scales strongly keeled; frontal not divided; frontonasal single; flank scales keeled and pointing straight backwards.

Tropidophorus robinsoni was previously known only from the type locality "Tasan, W. of Chumphon, P. Siam" (Smith, 1919), Khao Lak in Phang-nga Province, Thailand (Pauwels *et al*. 2000) and from Tanintharyi Division in Myanmar (Wogan *et al*. 2008). The new locality thus represents the first provincial record for Surat Thani Province (southern Thailand), the fourth locality for the species, and it partly fills approximately 200 km hiatus

Figure 1. Dorsal (A) and ventral (B) views of an adult female *Tropidophorus robinsoni* (THNHM 17962) from Khlong Saeng Wildlife Sanctuary, Surat Thani province, southern Thailand.

between Tasan and Khao Lak.

Current data seem to indicate that *Tropidophorus robinsoni* is restricted to peninsular Thailand and peninsular Myanmar (Figure 3), on both sides of the Isthmus of Kra. Further studies are recommended for better defining the distribution range of this rare species.

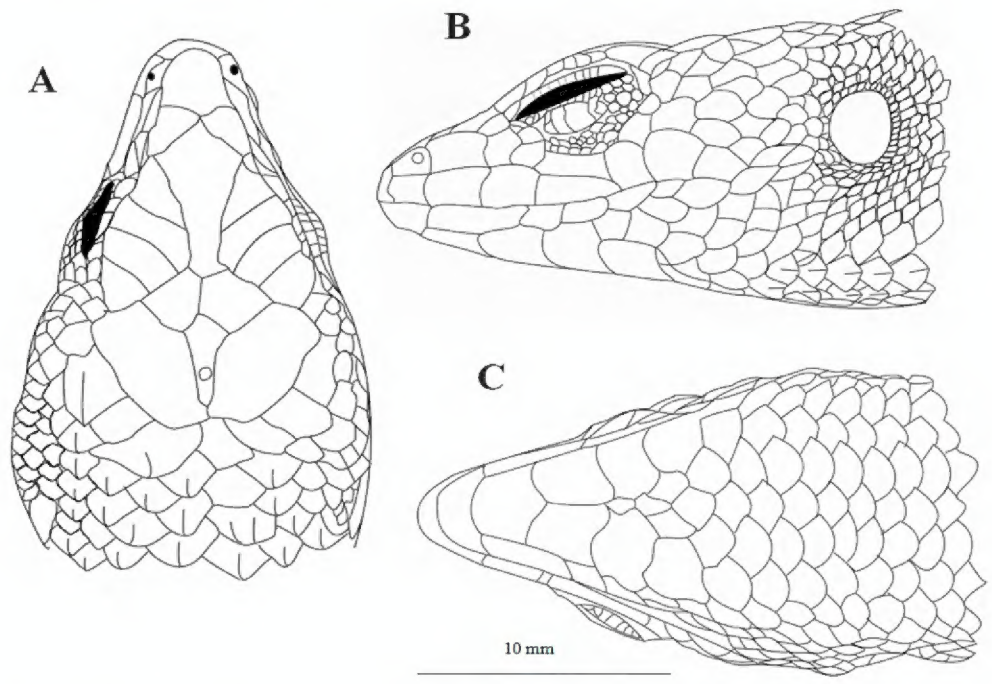

Figure 2. Dorsal (A), lateral (B), and ventral (C) head views of an adult female *Tropidophorus robinsoni* (THNHM 17962) from Khlong Saeng Wildlife Sanctuary, Surat Thani Province, southern Thailand. Scale bar indicates 10 mm.

Figure 3. Updated distribution map of *Tropidophorus robinsoni*: (★), type locality "Tasan, Chumpon Province" (=Tasan, Chumphon Province, Thailand); (■), Khao Lak, Phang-nga Province (Thailand); (●), Khlong Saeng Wildlife Sanctuary (Surat Thani Province, Thailand); and (▲), Tanintharyi Division (Myanmar).

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